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DEPARTMENT FOR AF AND AF/E
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/08/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [ET](#)
SUBJECT: ETHIOPIA: DISCUSSIONS WITH MFA STATE MINISTER AND
PM NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR ON OGADEN

REF: ADDIS 3254

Classified By: Embassy Addis Deputy Chief of Mission Deborah Malac for
reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

11. (C) In keeping with agreement reached at the October 31 meeting of the NGOs, UN agencies and embassies on the Ogaden hosted by Ambassador Yamamoto (ref 3254), Ambassador and DCM met on November 1 with MFA State Minister Tekeda Alemu to review our concerns on the deteriorating situation in the region and to urge swift GOE action to alleviate the humanitarian situation. Tekeda expressed surprise that food was not getting into the Ogaden and claimed there must be a problem with the implementation of the agreement between the GOE and the UN on access and delivery. He pledged to follow up with DPPA (the designated GOE entity for responding to the crisis) and the UN to determine what the impediments were. As for commercial food deliveries into the Ogaden, Tekeda noted that all corridors were open, but many truckers were too scared to venture into the region or were charging exorbitant security fees. In addition, said Tekeda, there just weren't enough trucks in usable condition available. Ambassador noted that we wanted to work closely with the GOE to help them address the humanitarian situation in the Ogaden, understanding that the GOE faced legitimate security concerns in the region. In conclusion, Tekeda said he was certain that we could find common ground on how best to respond to the Ogaden.

12. (C) As part of a November 2 meeting with National Security Advisor Abaye Tsehay Ambassador and DCM also raised our concerns on the Ogaden. Abaye said that the GOE was working diligently to move ahead with greater food deliveries, but noted, as did Tekeda, the lack of sufficient trucking capacity to move food either for humanitarian or commercial delivery. He also said that GOE was optimistic about the security situation in the Ogaden. Local, clan-based militias were taking over the fight in many areas, said Abaye, and having success in driving out ONLF elements because the elders and the local population were tired of the fighting.

13. (C) Comment: Ambassador, DCM and Embassy staff will continue to lead coordination with the UN, NGOs and donor community in the approach to the GOE. Ambassador and DCM will see Prime Minister Meles and other senior officials this week. It is clear that we have the attention of the GOE at the highest levels and that they are following up on food deliveries in response to agreements with the UN to open more

distribution sites. We will report significant developments
septel. End Comment.
Chief of Mission